

March 21, 2017

Thomas Morgart, State Conservationist  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
344 Merrow Road, Suite A  
Tolland, CT 06084

Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Re: Policy of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection regarding review of projects submitted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

The purpose of this policy is to improve efficiencies between the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the Connecticut Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as to consultation with the Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) regarding NRCS planning activities. The Department has determined that certain routine conservation practices supported by the NRCS, and conducted on private lands, do not pose a significant risk to species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or of Special Concern in Connecticut. As such, these practices do not necessitate a review by the NDDB.

Conservation practices that do NOT require a NDDB review include:

1. Any activity restricted to the existing footprint of the following land-cover types:
  - a. Row crops, vegetable crops, or annually cultivated fields
  - b. Impervious or graveled surfaces, such as farm headquarters and existing roads in upland areas (does not apply to stream or wetland crossings)
  - c. Managed turf
2. Any activity occurring within or on existing structures
3. Agricultural Energy Management Plans

The following activities, when not restricted to a land-cover type listed above, should still be submitted for review if the project area intersects with a NDDB Review Area:

1. Digging, excavating, trenching, etc.
2. Construction of temporary or permanent structures
3. Mechanical/chemical control of vegetation
4. Clearing, removal, or conversion of non-crop vegetation
5. Diversions from surface waters (if applicable)
6. Development and implementation of Forest Management Plans and practices
7. Dam removal/repair/construction

Please note that for these activities that require review, if the activity has not commenced by the expiration date noted in the NDDB response letter, a new review request will need to be submitted to the Natural Diversity Database.

Additionally, any activity proposed on lands owned by the State of Connecticut should be submitted for review regardless of whether the project area intersects with a NDDB Review Area.

Maps of NDDB Review Areas are available through the DEEP website ([www.ct.gov/deep/endangeredspecies](http://www.ct.gov/deep/endangeredspecies)) or the CTECO webpage ([www.cteco.uconn.edu](http://www.cteco.uconn.edu)) in the 'Map Catalog' and the interactive 'Map Viewers.'

To prevent multiple reviews of the same project, the NDDB also requests that NRCS staff share determination letters with their applicants and approved service providers, as applicable.

In the absence of any changes expressed in writing, the above policy is valid through **December 31, 2020** or until the NDDB self-service module is made available online.

Thank you for consulting with the Natural Diversity Database and NRCS's continued interest in protecting and promoting State-listed species. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any specific project(s), please contact [deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov](mailto:deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov).

Sincerely,



Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner

Cc: Nancy Ferlow, NRCS State Resource Conservationist  
Javier Cruz, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist